

Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Port of Bellingham, WA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA selected the Port of Bellingham for a Brownfields Pilot. The Port's main waterfront facilities are located in the City of Bellingham, which is a small, coastal community (population 63,000) midway between Seattle and Vancouver. Concerns about environmental liability and potential cleanup costs for a number of contaminated sites on the waterfront have discouraged business development in the area and resulted in ongoing environmental impacts and underused land. The Port of Bellingham has initiated the Central Waterfront Redevelopment Project to facilitate the cleanup and redevelopment of a 50-acre central waterfront area. The project site is owned by 10 separate public and private parties and lies between two federal navigation channels. Current and historical uses include boat yards, foundry activity, bulk petroleum storage, pulp and paper mill production, and a municipal landfill. The Port of Bellingham is approaching the overall redevelopment of the project area with the goals of pursuing environmentally sensitive economic revitalization that will create living wage jobs, revitalizing the working waterfront, and retaining Georgia-Pacific's local pulp and paper mill and the mill's 900 associated jobs.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Port of Bellingham, Washington

Date of Award: September 1996

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets 50 acres located in the core of the Port of Bellingham's historic commercial waterfront.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 10 Brownfields web site at:
[http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/webpage/
Brownfields?OpenDocument](http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/cleanup.nsf/webpage/Brownfields?OpenDocument)

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

The work of the Pilot assessment is aimed at two critical phases of the Port's 50-acre Central Waterfront Redevelopment Project. In phase 1, the Port expects to rally property owners and the community to develop a more comprehensive plan (phase 2) for other property in the area. The first phase of the Pilot (1996-1998) was devoted to completing expedited assessment and cleanup planning on the Roeder municipal landfill property. This included implementing a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) [partnership with the City of Bellingham, the Washington State Department of Ecology (WSDOE), and Georgia-Pacific] in addition to working with the owners of private property, located within the landfill boundary, to redevelop an 8-acre portion of the 20-acre landfill property. The construction of a 250,000-square-foot storage warehouse over the landfill by Georgia-Pacific was completed in 2000. The warehouse is designed to function as an environmental cap for a portion of the landfill. The objective of the second phase (1998-2000) of the Pilot was to develop a more comprehensive planning framework for the broader waterfront revitalization effort, which would include site characterization and land use planning components for the entire 50-acre area.

The Port of Bellingham's Central Waterfront Redevelopment Project will facilitate the cleanup and redevelopment of the 50-acre project area, including a large portion of the Roeder Avenue landfill. Future land use for the area is a critical issue for the Pilot.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Completed a feasibility level report for the Roeder Avenue warehouse;
- Compiled a data gaps technical report;
- Developed a conceptual design and calculated costs for a proposed environmental cap over the landfill and leachate and methane gas control based on the environmental investigation of the project area;
- Compiled an inventory of eight properties in the target area and targeted five for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment;

- Completed a geotechnical and environmental investigation of the Roeder Avenue landfill;
- Completed a site characterization report; and
- Completed a land use options report.

The Pilot is:

- Working with WSDOE to analyze cleanup alternatives for the project area; and
- Analyzing land use alternatives for redevelopment of the 50-acre project area.

LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Port of Bellingham Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities, including the following:

- Georgia-Pacific, a major waterfront property owner, completed construction of a 250,000-square-foot tissue warehouse on an eight-acre portion of the Roeder Avenue landfill.
- Market value appraisals were initiated on four properties (Sanitary Services, Chevron, Gaasland, and Golden).
- WSDOE completed assessments on an additional four properties in the waterfront area and recommended further response planning on three properties. The three include the Olivine property (owned by the Port), the Colony Wharf property (owned by B.C. Interprises), and the Chevron property. The Hawley Hilton Harbor property (owned by the Port) received a "no further action" letter.
- The Port initiated a remedial investigation/feasibility study at the Olivine property, which is scheduled for completion in 2001.
- The Port initiated rescoping work on the RI/FS at the Roeder Avenue landfill.
- Georgia-Pacific has contributed approximately \$130,000 to help fund Port-managed environmental investigations in the project area.
- Georgia-Pacific has contributed approximately \$1 million worth of environmental landfill capping in conjunction with the warehouse project.
- The Port and the city contributed \$300,000 each to fund the Roeder Avenue landfill RI/FS with oversight from WSDOE.

- The Port completed final geotechnical and environmental investigations on the proposed tissue warehouse to be located on 8 acres of the 20-acre Roeder Avenue landfill. Work on the larger Roeder Avenue landfill RI/FS is ongoing.
- Environmental investigations are ongoing at two privately held sites—the Chevron and Colony Wharf Sites.
- The Port is conducting an RI/FS under the state's Model Toxic Control Act at the Olivine site with completion expected in 2001. The Port is also evaluating future land use options at this Port-owned property.
- The Port acquired the Golder property.
- A state-funded site assessment conducted in November 1996 on the Hawley's Hilton Harbor site resulted in a determination of "no further action" by WSDOE in 1998. Planning activities for redevelopment are ongoing.
- The Bellingham Bay Demonstration Pilot Project Team recently initiated a feasibility study under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers General Investigation Authority to address navigation, sediment cleanup, and habitat restoration issues. Progress continues to be made on identifying opportunities to combine habitat restoration with sediment cleanup activities.